

# The Link



Sharing news from the Order of St John

## Kenya provide support to famine victims

In June St John Kenya received £33,000 from the St John Emergency Relief Fund to support victims of the ongoing and devastating famine. Here, we find out their progress.

In October, St John Kenya donated food and medicine worth £30,000 to internally displaced people in Isiolo and Garissa, in the east of the country. The four emergency medical camps were held amid ethnic clashes between neighbouring communities.

22,270 people (4,454 households) received one month of food supplies (right), and another 2,614 people benefited from free medication and treatment. Priority was given to the sick, elderly and breastfeeding mothers.



The communities and villages who benefited from the medical and food distribution exercise expressed their deep appreciation to SJ Kenya and the Order for the donations. 86 year old Kerio Aramau, one of the beneficiaries spoke highly of St John's efforts,

***"Our health is deteriorating because we are spending the nights in the cold, as we fear being attacked in our houses. This medication and food we've been given will help us."***

The beneficiaries were given maize, beans, sorghum and nutritious amaranth flour besides free medication. Hundreds of people also turned up for free medical treatment from the St John volunteer doctors, with most of them suffering from malaria, eye complications, respiratory tract infections and malnutrition. Those requiring surgical treatments were referred for specialised treatment. It is SJ Kenya's intention to continue serving the marginalised areas in Kenya through short, middle and long term interventions which aim to uplift the living standards of the population and empowering them to take care of their health needs. You can keep up to date with SJ Kenya's progress on their Facebook and YouTube pages.

## Minister of Health praises the work of St John in the Caribbean

*"Learning First Aid ought to be the civic responsibility of every citizen."* These were the words of the Honourable Donville Inniss, the Minister of Health for Barbados - who was addressing the St John Associations in the Caribbean at their Regional Meeting in Barbados in November.

Mr Inniss went on to say *"First aid training provides more than the knowledge and skills to effectively respond – it also provides the confidence to act when needed. The Ministry of Health recognises the tremendous importance of pre-hospital care and is therefore taking steps to improve in this area. St John is indeed an integral part of this process as an important part of the civil society and we thank you for your invaluable contribution. Government recognises that you can mobilise support and have strong links to the community. In essence, governments need non-governmental partners like St John."*

The annual Caribbean Regional Meeting, funded by the International Office, saw all 9 St John Associations come together to discuss the new regional youth programme, fundraising, volunteering, risk management and much more. The Chairman of SJ Barbados, Brigadier Rudyard Lewis said *"the conference was a huge success, the agenda was very informative and thank you to the IO for all their support"*.

# News from around the world...

## St John Singapore's 'Project Ray of Light 2011' to Cambodia

*Andrew Tay, Zone 2 President, talks to The Link about St John Singapore's ongoing commitment to supporting communities in Cambodia.*

This September, SJA Singapore continued its "Project Ray of Light" in Cambodia with a team of officers, presidents, and volunteers from Zone 2 giving our support to Po Banteay Chey Primary School, Siem Reap. Our work was in collaboration with the Family Care Cornerstone Project, a non-governmental organisation.

We spent the first 2 days of our trip at Po Banteay Chey Primary School. We have sponsored the repair of four classrooms and their library. Over the next 2 days, we trained some 200 students with essential first-aid skills, bandaging, hygiene/sanitation measures and transporting of casualty techniques. Besides teaching modified first-aid to the students at the primary school, we also donated equipment and first-aid supplies.



St John Singapore has been providing support to Cambodian communities since 2007 due to the great need for our work and skills. Working in partnership with organisations who have been working in Cambodia for a long time has been a huge success - allowing us to achieve much more and reaching out to communities and countries outside those of the Order. We tap on the resources of these organisations due to their years of experience and their understanding of the needs of the local population. I believe it is an excellent example how an organisation such as St John can partner with others whom we share common ideals and work towards Service to Mankind.



## First Aiders Praised by Dalai Lama

A group of St John Wales volunteers experienced a "once in a lifetime" opportunity when they met the Dalai Lama during a lifesaving trip in northern India in October 2011. The twelve young St John volunteers, aged from 16-25, along with four adult trainers, went to India for a 10 day visit in the northern Indian state of Himachal Pradesh to provide emergency first aid training and pass on a variety of lifesaving techniques.

In cooperation with the Tibetan Children's Village and at the direct request of the Dalai Lama, St John Wales volunteers aim to equip hundreds of Tibetan refugees, teachers, schoolchildren and home nurses in vital first aid skills.

The group of volunteers met the Dalai Lama, who is the spiritual leader of millions of Tibetan Buddhists, at his office in Dharmasala to report on their lifesaving activities. The Dalai Lama praised St John volunteers and said: *"I see you as I travel to many parts of the world. You do many good things and I know that you have done so much good work for my people in the training you have done here for many years."*

During the visit St John aimed to qualify at least 12 first aid trainers in the community to ensure further residents are equipped with first aid skills in the Tibetan's Children Village, which is home to 1,400 refugee children and local residents. The visit was made possible thanks to a £19,000 GwirVol Youth Volunteering Grant and the volunteers each raised £250 for the trip with any excess funds allocated for local community projects and first aid equipment. Communities were taught basic first aid skills such as CPR, the recovery position, how to deal with choking, first aid for babies and toddlers and other essential lifesaving techniques.

Major flooding has occurred during the 2011 monsoon season in Thailand. St John Malaysia has been actively involved in helping some flood victims by providing them with essential food and water supplies. Over 12.8 million people were affected, and the World Bank estimated damages reached 45 billion USD.

## Saving lives now and in the future - St John Canada's work in Haiti

Police officer Windy Joseph (*right*) is one of 2,200 officers of the Haitian National Police (HNP) force who has undergone extensive training in first aid and CPR since April this year. The programme is offered by the Haitian National Police Academy, in partnership with St John Ambulance Canada.



In September, Windy, a recently certified St John Ambulance (SJA) instructor, used her newly acquired skills to help a female detainee give birth. Windy was on an evening shift at the Bon Repos Sub-Commissariat when she heard cries from a woman in a detention cell who had gone into labour. Windy responded with the confidence and professionalism gained during her training with SJA. She quickly stepped into the cell and just fifteen minutes later a baby girl was born. Windy continued to provide the necessary care until a nurse arrived and attended to the new mother and baby.

The HNP faces many challenges but this first aid instructor training programme is proving invaluable to both the HNP and Haitians themselves, enabling police officers to respond to a wide range of emergencies with the skills and experience to save lives. *"We are extremely pleased to hear from officers that they have used their first aid skills in the call of duty."* says Joseph Tardée, lead HNP first aid instructor and coordinator.



The development of a group of first aid instructors within the HNP is critical to the success of the project. *"Thanks to the dedication and co-leadership of our HNP coordinators and other volunteers, we have been able to train an additional 100 trainers, in the last three months, who will teach first aid courses in the regions outside of the capital."* says William Black, St John Ambulance Project Manager.

Following the devastating earthquake in 2010, it was clear that Haitian infrastructure and HNP members providing emergency services needed to be better organised and prepared. In response, SJA has launched an emergency preparedness awareness training program for HNP managers.

*"The Hazards Identification and Risks Assessment exercise helps the Haitian National Police identify and evaluate risks in their own communities."* says Jean-Luc Marchessault, Emergency Preparedness Officer with St John Ambulance.

The four-day course brings together officers with diverse experiences in responding to emergencies and provides them with an opportunity to learn general concepts in emergency management and practice in order to develop emergency plans. SJA intends to train 400 officers by the end of 2012. The project is funded by the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade's Global Peace and Security Fund.

## The first ever St John Australia Flashmob!

At 2.00pm on the 24th of September 2011, St John Ambulance Australia held its first ever FLASHMOB! to promote the importance of learning life-saving first aid, especially CPR, within the Australian community.

You may be asking 'what is a Flashmob?'..well a flashmob occurs when a group of people assemble in a public place to perform some kind of 'act' and then disperse suddenly when the 'act' is complete. The 'act' is often used to send a message to spectators (like raising awareness of the importance of first aid).

Over 100 St John members and their friends and family, with representation from EVERY Australian state and territory, descended on Sydney's Central Railway Station to take part in the FLASHMOB. The members learnt the dance on the day and were performing on the concourse by 2pm to 'Heartbeat' by Grum. Commuters were surprised and very receptive of the cause and the mode of delivery.

The flashmob was recorded and can be viewed here: <http://youtu.be/EekFi4iso2I>

# News in brief....

## Looking to the future - the International Development Programme

Where does St John want to be over the next 10 years and how can we increase our impact and relevance at community level working with vulnerable families and individuals?

The answer to these questions has led to planning for a new international programme under the initiative of the Sub Prior, Professor Willis Marshall. With guidance from the newly formed Advisory Board, several decisions have been made about the development of this exciting programme.



Dominic Nahr 2011

In its first phase, the programme focus will be with St John Associations in Africa and the overarching theme will be health. St John is anxious to make a contribution to reaching the Millennium Development Goals which have a health focus including reducing maternal and child mortality; addressing HIV and AIDS, malaria and other diseases. The aim of the programme will be to build on the work already done by St John as community based, volunteer organisations. St John is hoping to attract external funding to implement the programme.

In line with good practice, the International Office has been working with St John Associations and an external consultant to begin a process of comprehensive consultation in 5 countries in Africa (Kenya, Malawi, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe). Firstly, St John will be talking to representatives from relevant ministries, the UN and international NGO bodies. Drawing together all the information from across the 5 countries will then allow us to have a common set of issues and questions to take directly to communities in each country. At the community level, we will consult with St John volunteers and hold focus group discussions with a wider section of selected communities. The discussions will draw out what the most important unmet health needs are as well as the gaps and challenges which communities experience and how St John might work to address these.

We are hoping that a common programme theme will emerge from across the 5 countries and that this will then form the basis for more detailed participatory programme planning. A workshop will be held in Nairobi in April 2012 when St John Associations in Africa will share the outcomes of their consultation processes.



### Till we meet again, au revoir - Emefa Toppar

After 5 years as Financial Controller here at the IO, it is time for me to leave. The decision to leave has not been an easy one but sometimes in order to experience something new you have to let go of what has become your security blanket. I have met some wonderful people and leave with good

memories. The skills and experiences acquired here will come to fruition in the years ahead. Keep the flag of St John flying high.

*On a temporary basis Emefa will be handing over her Chancery functions to Mrs Margaret Crane and her financial responsibilities to a temporary position, until permanent appointments can be made.*

### Seasons greetings

The International Office would like to wish everyone a very peaceful and relaxing time over the festive period. We look forward to another busy and exciting year and to keeping you updated with all the developments in 2012.

**Remember you can donate to us online at [www.justgiving.com/orderofstjohn](http://www.justgiving.com/orderofstjohn) or if you live in the UK you can text the words OOSJ23 £5 to 70070**

### Dates for the diary...

- 22nd Dec - 2nd Jan - International Office closed for Christmas period
- 20th February - Advisory Board meeting, London
- 21st-22nd February - Steering Committee meeting, London
- 29th-1st February - Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting, Hong Kong

For all the latest news and resources from the Order go to the website [www.orderofstjohn.org](http://www.orderofstjohn.org)

If you have any stories you would like to be covered in The Link or you would like any information on any of the news featured in this edition, please contact Gemma Mullick at the St John International Office at [gemma@orderofstjohn.org](mailto:gemma@orderofstjohn.org) or 0044 (0)20 7251 3292